



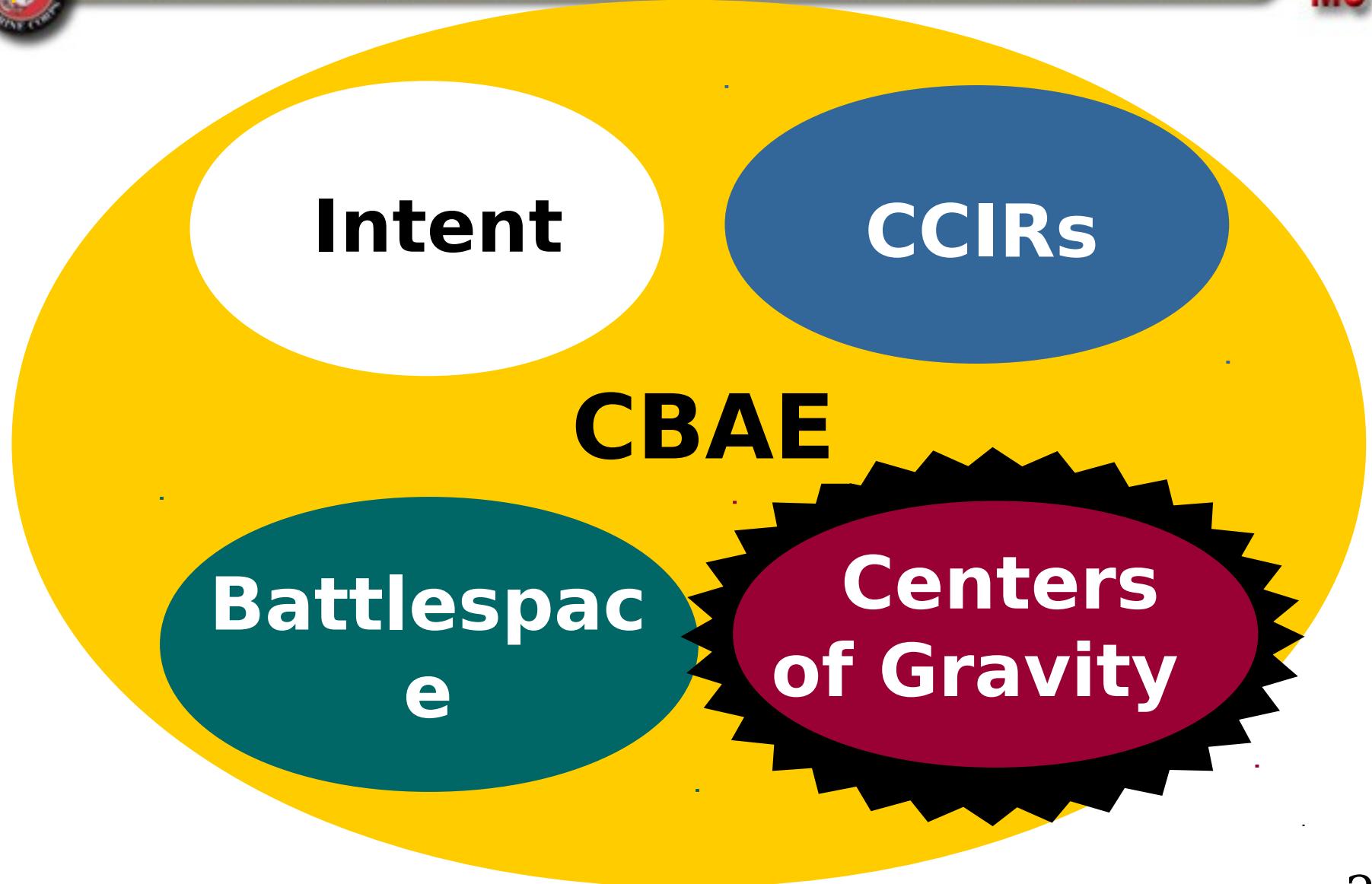
# Centers Of Gravity

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**LtCol Nick Nanna**

# Commander's Battlespace Area Evaluation

MSTP





# Purpose



MSTP

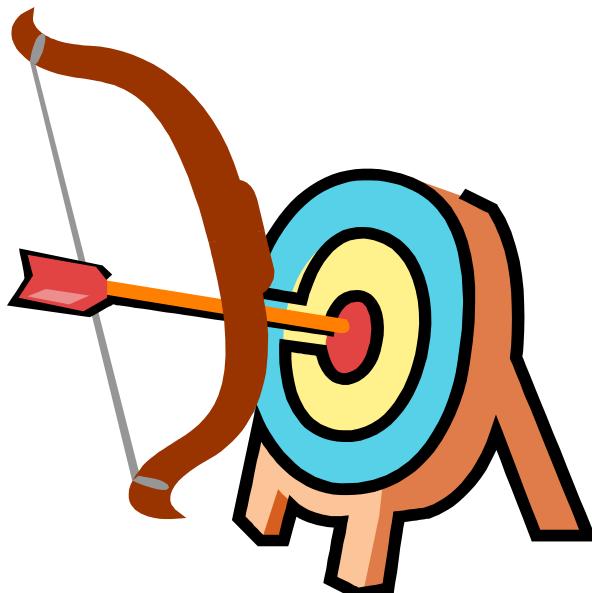
- Define COG
- Review levels of war & COG
- Discuss relevance of COG to MCPP

# Why Am I Interested Anyway?



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To win, we must focus combat power toward a decisive aim

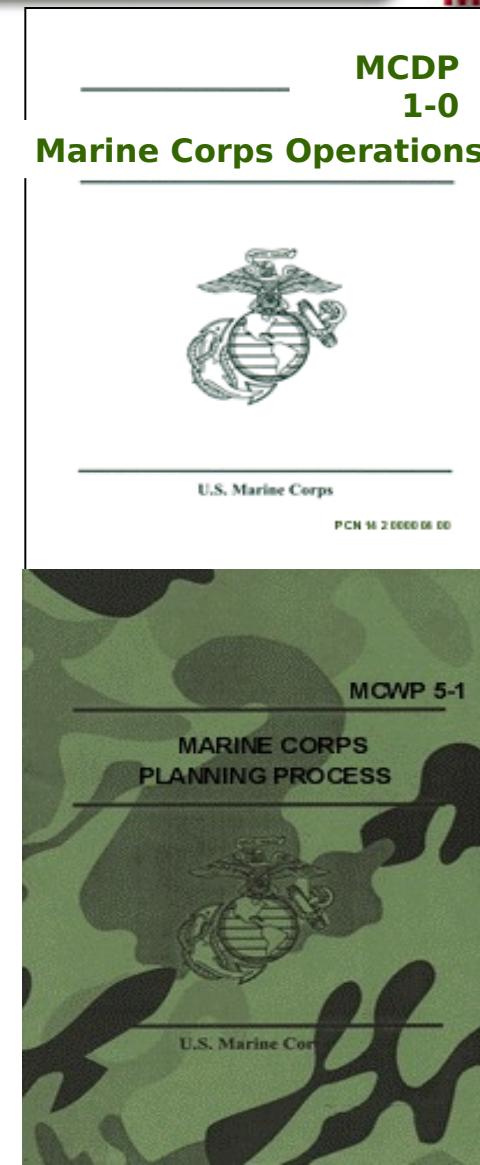
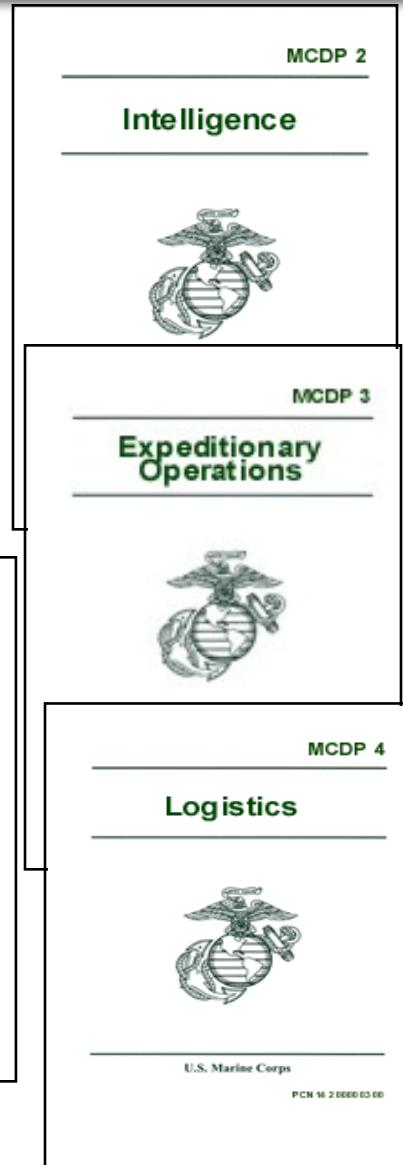
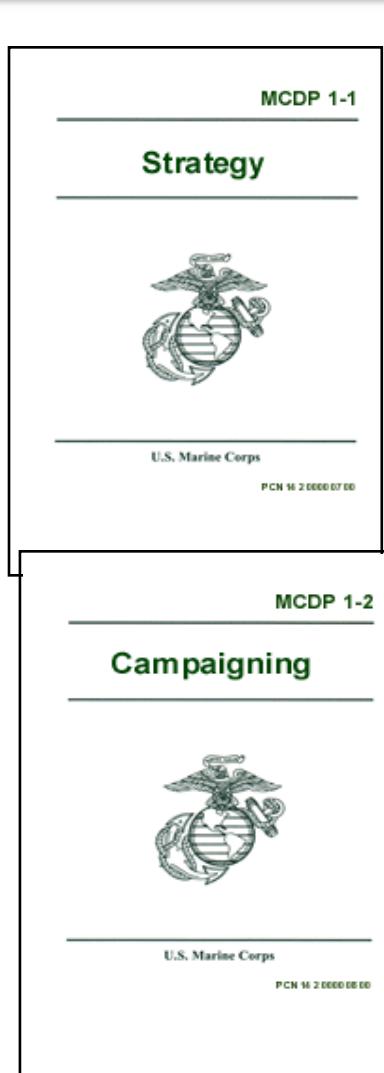
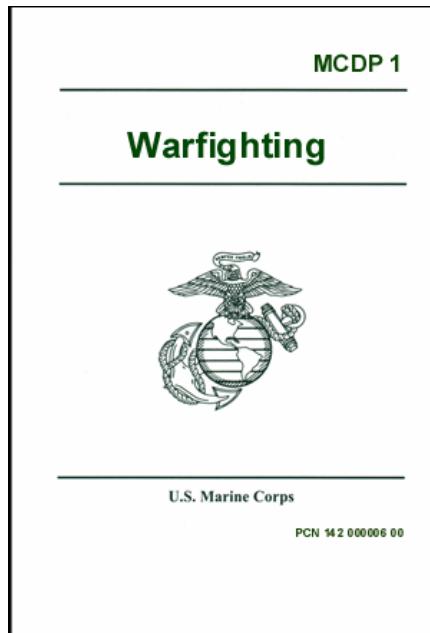


MCDP 1



# References

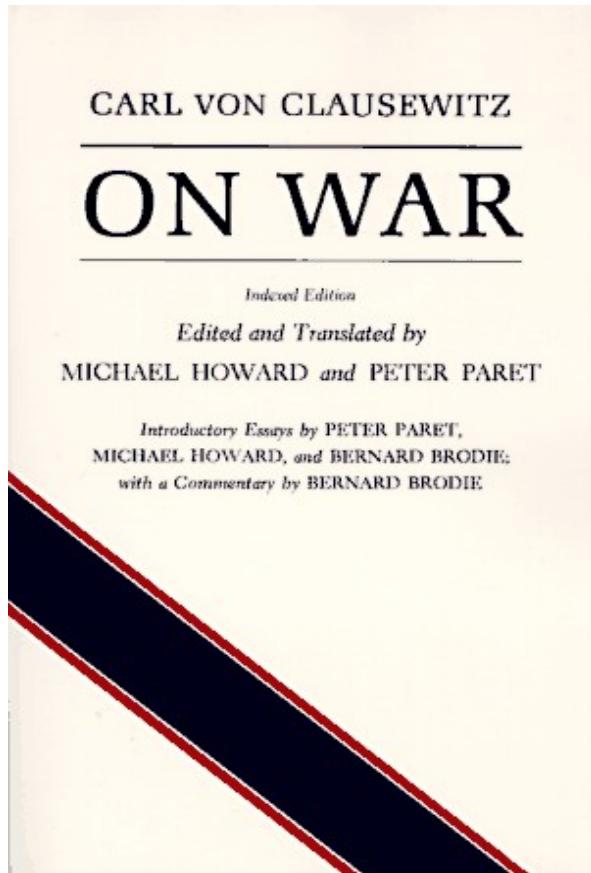
MSTP





# Reference?

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“... One must keep the dominant characteristics of both belligerents in mind. Out of these characteristics a certain center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends.”



# COG Arguments

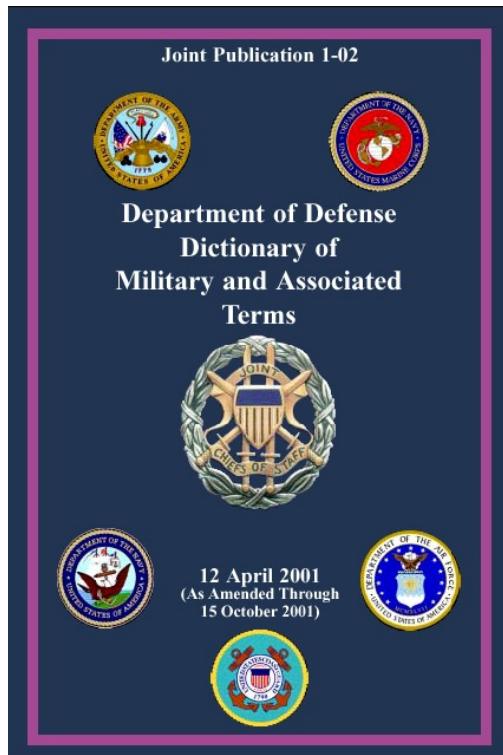
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- A strength, weakness, or vulnerability?
- A concentration of military forces or an intangible?
- Multiple COGs?
- This is nothing new!

# What Is A Center Of Gravity?

MSTP



Those characteristics, capabilities, or localities from which a military force derives its freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight

JP 1-02

# Service Concepts Of COG



MSTP

- USAF: Targeting approach to COG. Critical aim points “Wardens Rings”
- Army: Source of strength, single COG
- Navy: Source of strength, something the enemy must have to continue military operations

# What Is A Center Of Gravity?



MSTP

- Any important source of strength.  
Which factors are critical to the enemy?  
MCDP 1
- Sources of mental, moral, or physical strength, power, and/or will. . . COGs may exist at each level of war.



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# What Is A Center Of Gravity?



MSTP

- Any important source of strength...
  - critical factors which, if eliminated, will bend him most quickly to our will
  - may be intangible: resolve or morale
  - may be capabilities: armor, aviation
  - may be the relationship between two or more components, an alliance, or the junction of forces
- Applies equally to both threat and friendly forces and to the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war

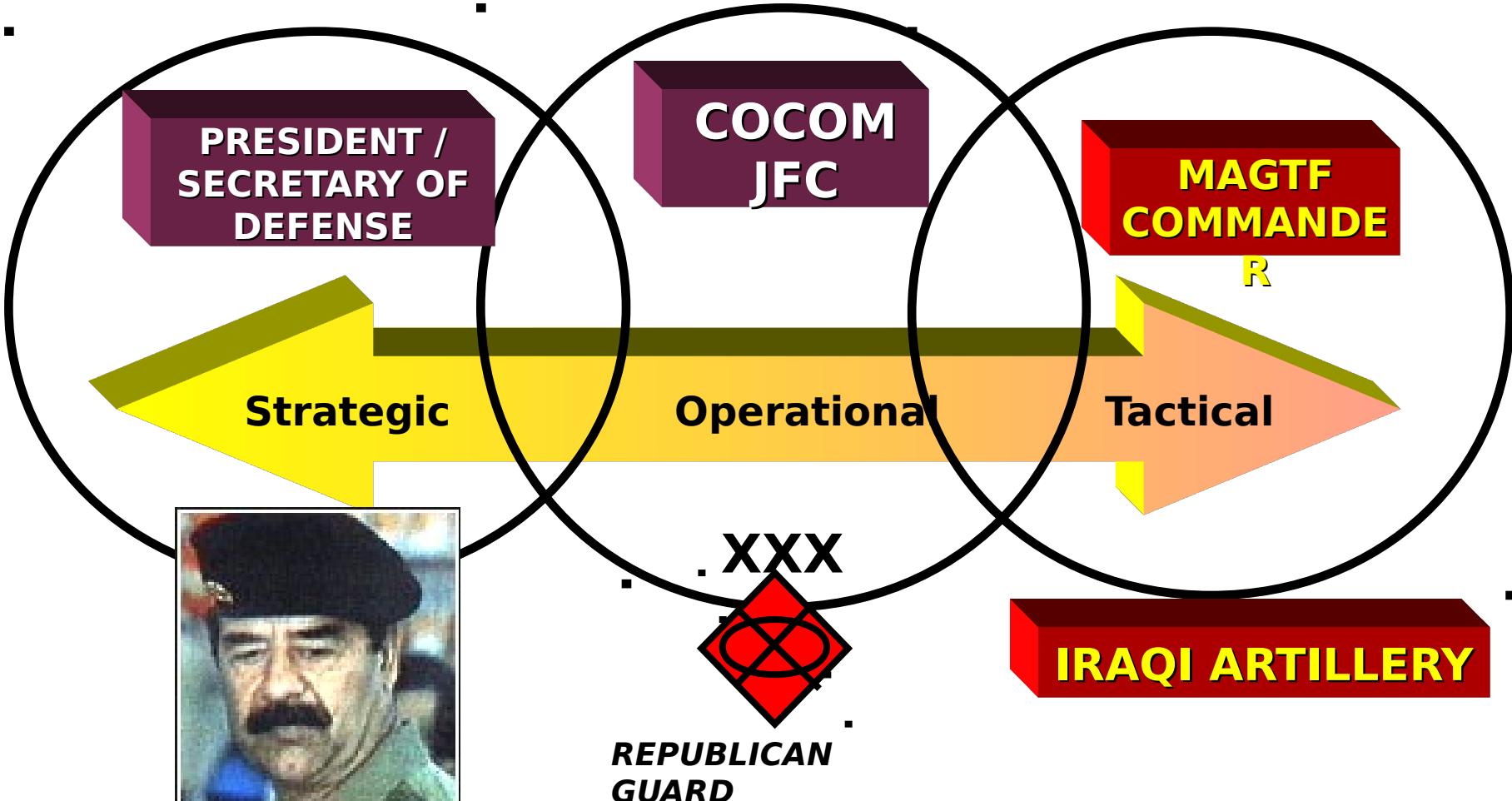
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# Spectrum Of Conflict



MSTP

## OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM EXAMPLE:





# Tactical COG

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- At the tactical level, the enemy's COG is *normally* an enemy unit

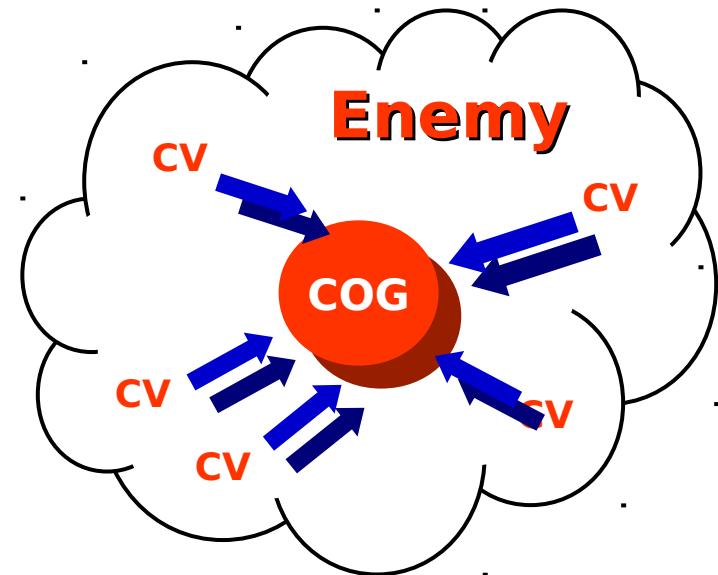
MCWP 5-1

# Critical Vulnerabilities



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- It will be vital to identify COGs rapidly and determine the critical vulnerabilities that will be our pathways to them





# Critical Vulnerabilities



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- A vulnerability that, if exploited, will do the most significant damage to the enemy's ability to resist...
  - a pathway to attacking a center of gravity
  - the more we narrow it down, the more easily we can focus
  - it will often be necessary to attack several lesser...critical vulnerabilities simultaneously or in sequence in order to have the desired effect
- Complementary concepts...(with) the same underlying purpose: to target our actions... to have the greatest effect on the enemy...

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# Linkages

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COG analysis, based on expected enemy COA, helps the commander orient on the enemy. It provides a framework from which to identify enemy HVTs and subsequent HPTs

## CENTER OF GRAVITY

**Mobile Reserves**  
**102 Armored Bde**

## CRITICAL VULNERABILITIES

**C2 Vulnerable To Attack And Neutralization**

**Inadequate Air Defense**

**Logistics**

**Wireless Communications System Vulnerable To Electronic Attack And Physical Destruction**

### **HIGH-VALUE TARGET (HVT)**

**Assets that the enemy commander requires for the successful completion of a specific course of action**



### **HIGH-PAYOUT TARGET (HPT)**

**A target whose loss to the enemy will contribute to the success of the friendly course of action**

**Some become HPTs**

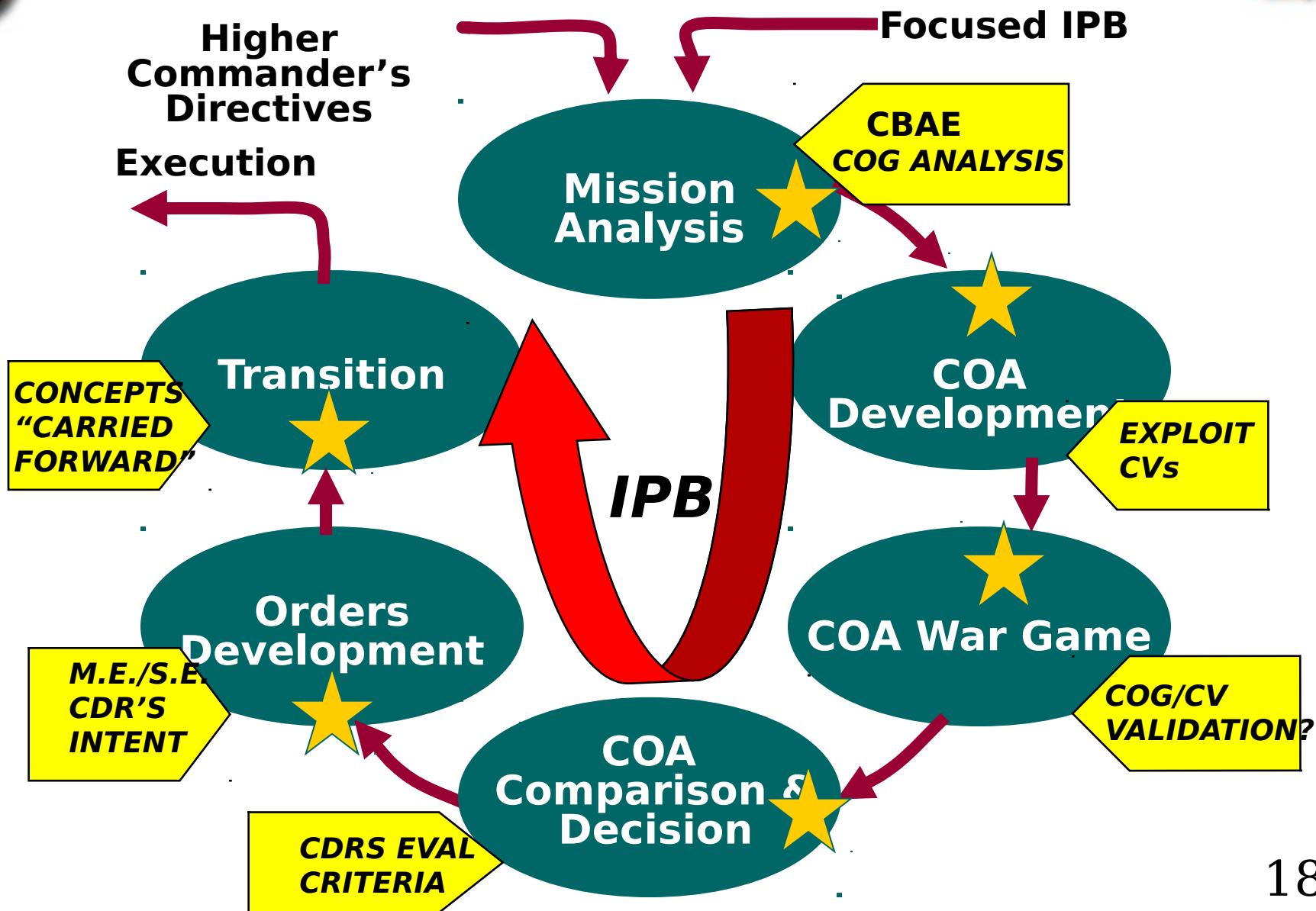
# COG's Value In MCPP



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- Part of CBAE
- Part of Top-Down Planning
- Helps focus the staff on the enemy

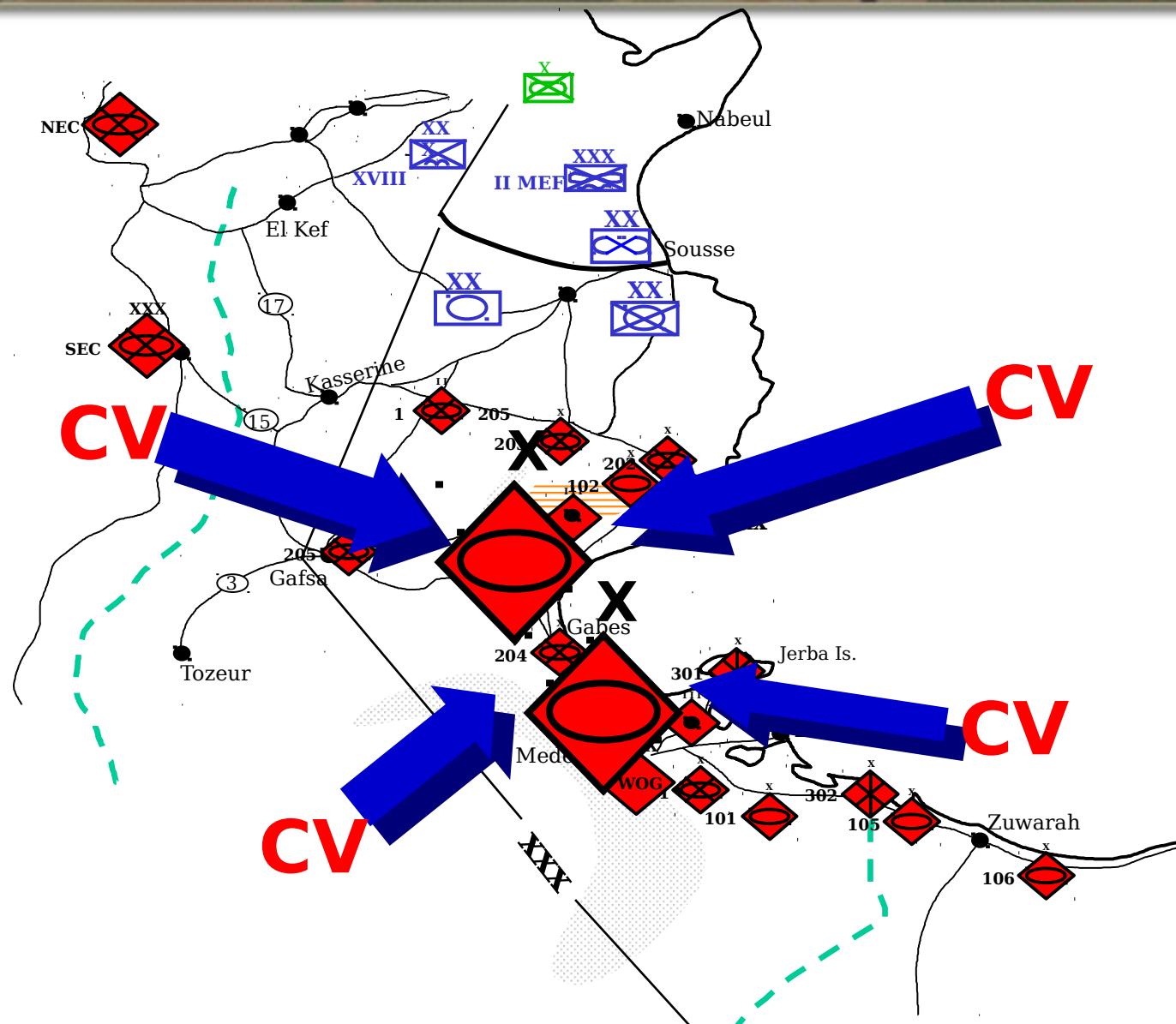
# Marine Corps Planning Process



# Enemy Center Of Gravity



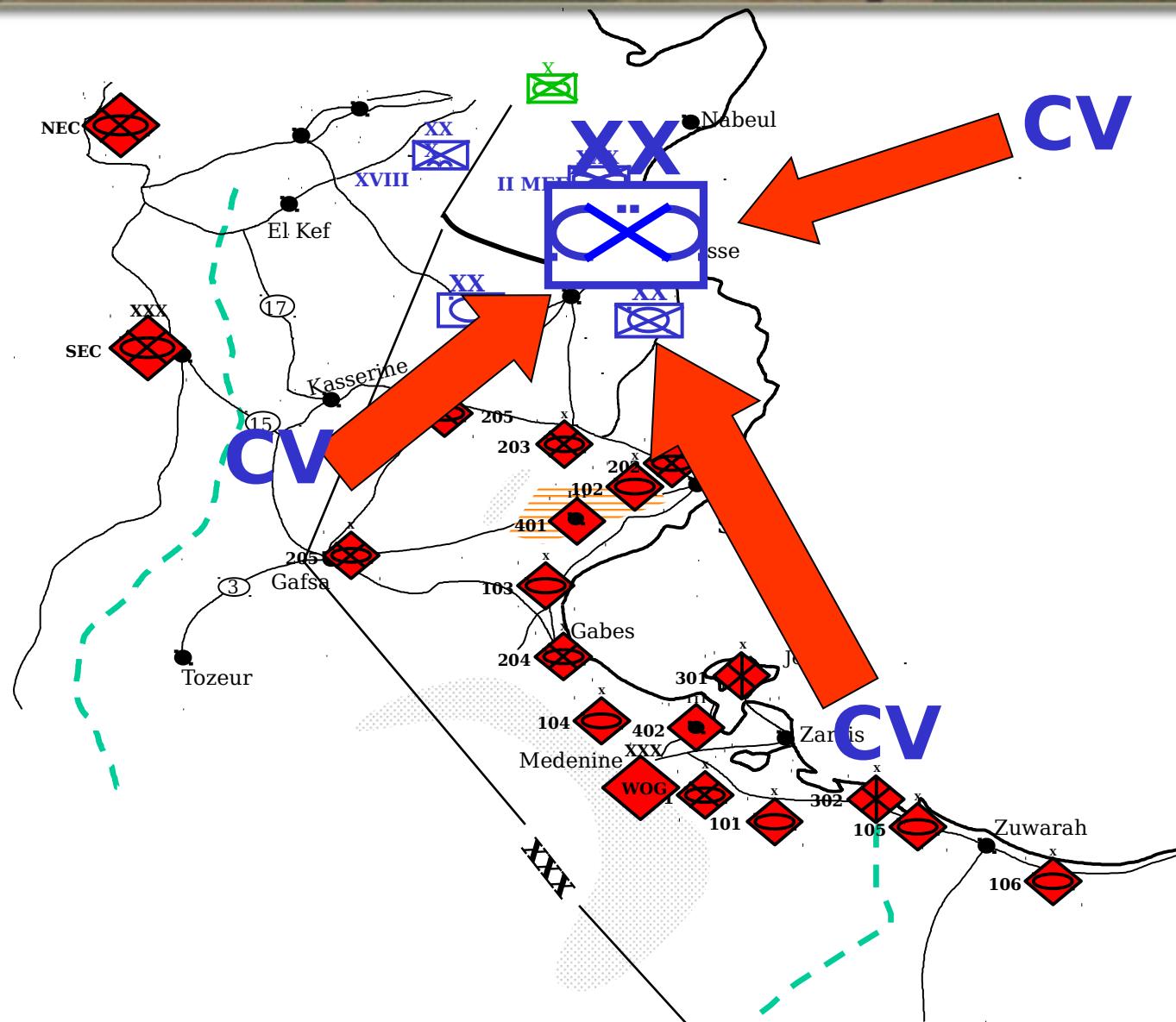
MSTP



# Friendly Center Of Gravity



## MSTP





- **ENEMY**
  - What do I kill to win decisively?
  - What concerns me about the enemy?
  - What could stop me from achieving my purpose?
  - What must I do to achieve a decision?
- **FRIENDLY**
  - What do I use to win decisively?
  - What is my source of disproportionate strength?
  - What must I protect?
  - What must I do to achieve a decision?



# Summary

MSTP

- COG is a key source of strength
- COGs exist at all levels of war
- COG is a key element of MCPP providing a foundation and focus for planning

